Amendments to the Claims

1. (Currently amended) A surgical instrument comprising:

a receiving component having a longitudinal axis and defining a cavity;

a modular tip that includes a mating component, the mating component configured to ~~extend~~ be coupled to the receiving component by insertion of the mating component into the ~~cavity~~ receiving component in a direction ~~transverse~~ substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the receiving component, or by rotating the mating component relative to the receiving component, or a combination thereof, and configured to be coupled in a rigid manner to the receiving component in two or less orientations; and

a locking mechanism at the receiving component for securing the tip to the receiving component, the locking mechanism extending through the cavity, and slideably moveable to and from a locked position, wherein the locking mechanism engages at least two outer surfaces of the mating component.

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Previously Presented) The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the mating component is configured to be coupled to the receiving component to form a coupling such that the coupling, without the engagement of the locking mechanism to the surfaces of the mating component, can prevent relative movement between the mating component and the receiving component when a force is applied to the coupling in a direction substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis.

4. (Previously Presented) The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the mating component has at least three planar surfaces configured to engage at least three planar surfaces of the receiving component.

5. (Canceled).

6. (Previously Presented) The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein surfaces of the mating component that engage the locking mechanism are planar.

7. (Previously Presented) The surgical instrument of Claim 6, wherein surfaces of the locking mechanism that engage the mating component are planar.

8. (Original) The surgical instrument of Claim 7, further comprising a spring for resiliently biasing the locking mechanism in a locked position.

9. (Currently amended) The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the locking mechanism includes a first member and a second member being moveable within the cavity of the receiving component, each member having a surface that engages, in a locked position, at least one of the surfaces of the mating component.

10. (Withdrawn) The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the locking mechanism includes a collar slideable along the longitudinal axis of the receiving component between a locked position and an unlocked position.

11. (Withdrawn) The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the locking mechanism includes a collar rotatable about the receiving component between a locked position and an unlocked position.

12. (Currently Amended) The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the receiving component includes ~~a recess and~~ an opening and the cavity and the opening ~~that~~ form a connecting member in the receiving component, the connecting member being configured to cooperatively engage a recess in the mating component.

13. (Withdrawn) The surgical instrument of Claim 1, ~~wherein the tip includes a mating component configured to be coupled to the receiving component,~~ further comprising a rod configured to cooperatively engage a semi-circular recess in the mating component.

14. (Original) The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the instrument is configured to be used in the compression or distraction of objects.

15. (Original) The surgical instrument of Claim 1, wherein the receiving component is provided at an end of a handle.

16. (Currently Amended) A surgical instrument comprising:

a receiving component having a longitudinal axis and defining a cavity;

a modular tip including a mating component configured to be coupled in a rigid manner to the receiving component; and

a locking mechanism at the receiving component for securing the mating component to the receiving component, the locking mechanism extending through the cavity, and slideablv moveable to and from a locked position, wherein the locking mechanism engages at least two outer surfaces ~~on opposed sides of the longitudinal axis~~ of the ~~receiving~~ mating component; ~~and~~

wherein the mating component ~~being~~ is configured to be coupled to the receiving component to form a coupling such that the coupling, without the engagement of the locking mechanism to the mating component, can prevent relative movement between the mating component and the receiving component when a force is applied to the coupling in a direction substantially parallel to the longitudinal axis; and

wherein the mating component is configured to be coupled to the receiving component by insertion of the mating component into the receiving component in a direction substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the receiving component, or by rotating the mating component relative to the receiving component, or a combination thereof.

17. (Original) The surgical instrument of Claim 16, wherein the mating component is configured to be coupled to the receiving component by insertion of the mating component into the receiving component in a direction substantially perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the receiving component, or by rotating the mating component relative to the receiving component, or a combination thereof.

18. (Previously Presented) The surgical instrument of Claim 16, wherein surfaces of the mating component that engage the locking mechanism are planar.

19. (Withdrawn) The surgical instrument of Claim 18, wherein the planar surfaces are tapered.

20. (Previously Presented) The surgical instrument of Claim 18, wherein surfaces of the locking mechanism that engage the mating component are planar.

21. (Original) The surgical instrument of Claim 16, wherein the receiving component includes a recess and an opening that form a connecting member in the receiving component, the connecting member being configured to cooperatively engage a recess in the mating component.

22. (Currently Amended) An attachment mechanism for a device, comprising:

a modular tip that includes a u-shaped mating component with a recess formed therein;

a receiving component ~~having a longitudinal axis and defining a cavity~~ having a connecting member that is configured to be received in the recess in the u-shaped mating component, the receiving component configured to be coupled in a rigid manner to the mating component in two or less orientations; and

a locking mechanism at the receiving component for securing the u-shaped mating component to the receiving component, the locking mechanism extending through the cavity, and slideably moveable ~~along the longitudinal axis~~ to and from a locked position, wherein the locking mechanism engages at least two outer surfaces of the mating component.

23. (Withdrawn) The attachment mechanism of Claim 22, wherein the locking mechanism includes a collar slideable along, or rotatable about, the receiving component.

24-25. (Cancelled).

26. (Currently Amended) A surgical instrument comprising:

a receiving component having a longitudinal axis and defining a cavity;

a modular tip that includes a mating component, the mating component configured to be coupled in a rigid manner to the receiving component in two or less orientations;

a locking mechanism at the receiving component for securing the tip to the receiving component, the locking mechanism extending through the cavity, and slideably moveable to and from a locked position, wherein the locking mechanism engages at least two surfaces of the mating component; and

a spring ~~for~~ that applies a ~~resiliently~~ biasing force along the longitudinal axis to the locking mechanism to maintain the locking in a locked position ~~along the longitudinal axis~~.